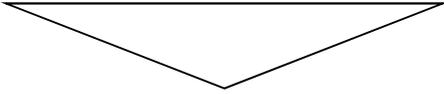




**SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE
TRANSITIONAL INTERIM COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN
(YEAR 2018-2019)**

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Duration (starting date – end date) | January 2018 to February 2019 |
| Total cost to WFP | USD 334,606 |
| Gender and Age Marker Code | 2A |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe is a lower middle income and food deficit country, ranked 142nd out of 188 countries on the 2015 Human Development Index (HDI). More than 60 percent of the population (over 197,900 inhabitants) is estimated to be living below the national poverty threshold with significant poverty disparities between men and women.

Persistent political instability, high unemployment rates, and unequal wealth distribution coupled with poor infrastructure and reliance on food imports are the main drivers of food and nutrition insecurity countrywide. Furthermore, this situation is exacerbated by recurring natural disasters such as floods and landslides.

São Tomé and Príncipe's commitment to implement the Sustainable Development Goals is embedded in the country's Vision 2030 Transformation Agenda, which is the basis for achieving long-term national development objectives. Relevant sectoral plans include the secondnd National Strategy for Poverty Reduction (SNRP - II), the National Food Security and Nutrition Programme, and the National Social Protection Policy and Strategy.

The national school meals programme currently covers 43,000 children in primary schools. In line with government priorities, and based on lessons learned from previous interventions, WFP will pursue the following strategic outcome through the Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (T-ICSP):

- The Government of São Tomé and Príncipe has enhanced capacity to implement food security and nutrition focused safety nets nationwide.

In 2015, the handover of the school feeding programme was finalized. During the T-ICSP timeframe (Jan 2018 – Feb 2019), WFP will increasingly engage in technical assistance and capacity development activities to ensure the sustainability of the handover to Government. WFP's work will focus on strengthening the Government's capacity, in particular that of the Ministry of Education. WFP will also contribute to link small-scale producers to market opportunities in order to improve their incomes and to sustain Home-Grown School Feeding activities. Finally, WFP will reinforce partnerships and advocate for the national multi-sectorial coordination mechanism to strengthen safety net systems, such as income generation activities as well as health, nutrition and education services. This will be done in close collaboration with United Nations agencies and other relevant partners like key national stakeholders and non-governmental organizations.

1. COUNTRY ANALYSIS

1.1. COUNTRY CONTEXT

1. The Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, an archipelago comprising two main islands and four islets in the Gulf of Guinea off the coast of West Africa, is a lower middle income country ranked 142nd out of 188 countries on the 2015 Human Development Index (2016 Human Development Report).
2. With an estimated population of around 197,900 people and an annual growth rate of 2.45 percent per year, about half of the population is under 18 years.¹ Life expectancy at birth stands at 66.5 years (68.4 for women and 64.4 for men). In 2015, more than 60 percent of the population was estimated to be living below the poverty line. Poverty affects women (71.3 percent) more than men (63.4 percent).
3. Unequal income distribution shows that the gender wage gap is still high in São Tomé and Príncipe. On average, women earn half as much as men do. São Tomé and Príncipe is ranked in group 5 of the gender development index, which comprises countries with low equality in HDI achievements between women and men.²
4. The case of extreme poverty is higher in families headed by women (12.8 percent) than in those headed by men (10.7 percent). In fact, being a female head of household increases the probability of being extremely poor in urban areas by 8.4 percent and in rural areas by 19.5 percent. Interestingly however, 59.2 percent of the extremely poor live in male-headed household compared to 40.8 percent of those living in female-headed households.³
5. In the education sector, the country has made significant progress in gender equality. About half of the students enrolled in primary school are girls (49 percent). The repetition rate of girls is also lower than that of boys (40 percent versus 50 percent). In secondary level, the net enrollment rate is higher for girls than for boys (65 percent versus 55 percent). Furthermore, the literacy rate among young people (15-24 years) is slightly higher among girls than boys (90 percent versus 88 percent)
6. However, gender equality and empowerment of woman remain a challenge for the country at policy and programme level. The country is ranked 115th in terms of gender inequality, with a Gender development index of 0,894. São Tomé and Príncipe still faces discrimination against women in access to employment. 60 percent of men are economically active against only 40 percent women. For every 100 women unemployed, there are only 60 among men. In the executive branch, male predominance is also noted: for the 13 executive posts (Prime Minister, 11 ministries and a secretariat of state) in the current government, only 2 are headed by a woman. Political instability coupled with frequent changes in Government and significant institutional, economic and financial challenges do not allow for the adoption of a coherent, forward-looking government strategy and long-term public policies. However, the country presents evidence of good

¹ World Bank, 2016. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/saotome/overview#1>.

² UNDP, 2015. Human Development Report. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>

³ Ministério do Plano e do Desenvolvimento, 2012. Segunda Estratégia Nacional de Redução da Pobreza 2012-2016, São Tomé.

governance,⁴ with relatively high levels of safety and rule of law,⁵ freedom, civil and political rights,⁶ and low levels of corruption.⁷

1.2. PROGRESS TOWARDS SDG 2

➤ *Progress on SDG2 targets*

- *Access to food*

7. São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) has made notable progress in the fight against hunger. The country achieved, for example, MDG Goal 1 Target 1C (halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger). Indeed, between 1990 and 2015 the number of undernourished fell by 51.4 percent, and the prevalence of undernourishment decreased by 71.2 percent. Nonetheless, food insecurity and malnutrition persist with 6.6 percent of the population still suffering from undernourishment.⁸ Food and nutritional insecurity in STP is the result of several factors. High unemployment rates and weak agricultural, fishing and livestock sectors, compounded with the impact of natural disasters, do not allow sufficient food production to meet the needs of the population. Heavy reliance on food imports (cereals, beans, oil, meat, dairy or other animal products) exposes the country to fluctuating food prices and affects the livelihoods of vulnerable people. Although the majority of households spend their income on food (83 percent for extremely poor families and 79 percent for poor families), food availability and market stability, specifically in the peak of the rainy season, are unpredictable due to limited infrastructure.⁹

- *End malnutrition*

8. In STP, inadequate food practices, difficult access to a diversified and balanced diet, as well as poor sanitation and health coverage constitute other determinants of food and nutritional insecurity.
9. Despite steady improvements in child nutrition, considerable challenges remain. Chronic malnutrition (stunting) affects 31.6 percent of children; acute malnutrition (wasting) affects 11.2 percent; and overweight affects 11.6 percent. Adults are also affected by overweight (34.8 percent) and obesity (12.3 percent).¹⁰
10. The country also presents critical challenges in terms of micronutrient deficiencies, particularly iron deficiency. The prevalence of anemia among children and women is very high (67 and 43 percent respectively) and on the rise countrywide. This prevalence is even higher in the South (74 percent) and in Príncipe (71 percent). On a positive note, vitamin A supplementation has increased and is now reaching 71 percent of children. In addition, diarrhea and respiratory infection prevalence among children is also well controlled,

⁴ The country was ranked 13th out of 54 countries in the Mo Ibrahim Index of Good African Governance 2015. www.moibrahimfoundation.org/iiag

⁵ The country is ranked 9th in Africa, ranking first in Central Africa for security and the rule of law.

⁶ The country received a score of 2 (1 best and 7 worst) in the Freedom in the World 2015 Report. <https://freedomhouse.org/>

⁷ The country was ranked 66 out of 167 countries in the Global Corruption Perception Index 2015. www.transparency.org

⁸ FAO, 2015. L'État de l'insécurité alimentaire dans le monde 2015. Objectifs internationaux 2015 de réduction de la faim: des progrès inégaux. Rome, FAO.

⁹ World Bank, 2016, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/saotome/overview#1>.

¹⁰ International Food Policy Research Institute. 2016. Global Nutrition Report 2016: From Promise to Impact: Ending Malnutrition by 2030. Washington, DC.

mainly due to improved access to safe drinking water and sanitation, particularly in rural areas.¹¹

- *Smallholder productivity and incomes*

11. The nationalization of cocoa plantations in the 1980s and the agricultural privatization in the 1990s have resulted in the creation of small and medium-sized agricultural enterprises. However, lack of the technical and financial support required to sustain smallholder production has led to the abandonment of many farms and to an exodus of the population from the rural areas to urban centers. This negatively affects national agricultural production and food security, and places strong demographic pressure on larger settlements, thereby affecting the living standards of the population. Although migration to the cities seems to be slowing down, the average annual urbanization growth rate between 2013 and 2018 is estimated at 1.9 percent.¹² The national tendency is only reversed in the districts of Mé Zochi, Lobata and Príncipe, where most of the active agricultural production is concentrated.¹³ In 2012, the agriculture sector employed 20 percent of the work force. In the districts of Lembá and Caué the rate is much higher, with over 50 percent of the working population dedicated to agriculture. In terms of gender distribution, women represent 12 percent of the total workforce in agriculture.¹⁴ Among the labor force, the self-employed in the agricultural sector are most exposed to poverty (69 percent).¹⁵

12. São Tomé and Príncipe has considerable maritime natural resources and a diversified fishery potential, especially around the island of Príncipe. Some 6.8 percent of the working population depends on fishing for their livelihood. However, the fisheries sector is experiencing notable difficulties due to a lack of infrastructure, including the low capacity of production equipment, and due to inappropriate or non-existent processing and preservation facilities. The sector contributes only 8 percent to the GDP.¹⁶

- *Sustainable food systems*

13. With a rather fragile and weak subsistence agriculture, the country imports a large part of its food requirements. The agricultural sector mainly focuses on cash crops such as cocoa, coffee and pepper destined for export. Efforts to diversify food production have resulted in the production of bananas, cassava and maize, but always below the levels required to meet the needs of the domestic market. Poor infrastructure, insufficient buy-in by the Government, inadequate scientific research, as well as a limited number of small-scale farms explain the low levels of productivity. In addition, rural producers are not involved in discussions on agricultural and rural development policies. Furthermore, the country is exposed to natural disasters, such as landslides and floods, which affect crops and vulnerable populations.¹⁷

➤ *Macro-economic environment*

¹¹ Instituto Nacional de Estatística e Unicef, 2015. Inquérito de Indicadores Múltiplos, São Tomé e Príncipe, MICS-STP, 2014 de recolha dos dados, Principais Constatações. São Tome, São Tomé e Príncipe, INE e UNICEF.

¹² AfDB, OECD, UNDP, 2016, African Economic Outlook, São Tomé and Príncipe.

¹³ Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2014, Estado Estrutura da População em S. Tomé e Príncipe, Recenseamento Geral da População e Habitação-2012. - S. Tomé: INE, 2014,

¹⁴ Instituto Nacional De Estatística, 2014. Características Económicas da População, RGPH-2012. - S. Tomé: INE, 2014, - 127 p.

¹⁵ Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2012. Inquérito aos Orçamentos Familiares 2010: Perfil da Pobreza em São Tomé e Príncipe. São Tome. 2012.

¹⁶ Ministério do Plano e do Desenvolvimento, 2012. Segunda Estratégia Nacional de Redução da Pobreza 2012-2016, São Tomé.

¹⁷ FAO, 2012, Cadre de Programmation Pays 2014-2017, São Tomé et Principe.

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14. São Tomé and Príncipe recorded moderate macro-economic gains in 2016, and the economy is projected to grow by 5.4 percent in 2017.¹⁸ This growth should be driven by agriculture (cash crop for export), tourism, and increased foreign direct investment in infrastructure development to support the Government’s transformative agenda, and new projects (yet unconfirmed) financed by donors. With São Tomé and Príncipe’s heavy dependence on external aid and global economic fluctuations, significant changes in the donor landscape and allocation of development funds may affect its ability to reach the projected growth.¹⁹
15. The service sector accounts for two-thirds of GDP, while the primary and secondary sectors share the remaining third. The Government met its annual inflation target of 5 percent for 2015, mostly driven by the fixed exchange regime pegging the Dobra (the national currency) to the Euro and by easing food and fuel prices. As a net food and fuel importer, the country is vulnerable to international market price fluctuations. A further decline to a 4 percent inflation rate is expected in 2017, supported by the fixed exchange regime.
16. Total debt is estimated to have reached 75 percent of GDP in 2015. The review of the country’s debt sustainability (carried out by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) has reported improvements, led mainly by growing trends in exports from 2013 to 2015. However, the progress was still insufficient to change the country’s overall debt position, which remains at “high risk”.²⁰

➤ *Key cross-sectorial linkages*

17. Despite the adverse socio-economic conditions, the country has reached three of the Millennium Development Goals, namely: i) MDG 2, achieve universal primary education (with a net enrolment rate of 98 percent in 2015 with similar rates for girls and boys); ii) MDG 4, reduce child mortality (with infant mortality rate of 36.5 per 1,000 live births); and iii) MDG 5, improve maternal health (with maternal mortality at 76 per 100,000 live births in the same year). Significant progress has also been made in the fight against HIV/AIDS (prevalence has been reduced to 0.5 percent in 2015), malaria control (no deaths in 2015), and access to sanitation and drinking water.²¹
18. Because of the importance of food to the domestic economy and political stability of São Tomé and Príncipe, SDG 2 and SDG 17 are important for the Government. Notwithstanding, other SDGs will also be addressed by boosting the agriculture and fishery sectors, which could contribute to addressing under-employment and poverty, especially among women and youth (SDG 1). Boosted agriculture and fishery sectors could also address gender inequality through increased participation of women in decision-making processes and their participation in civil society movements (SDG 5). The expansion of the national school feeding programmes is a national priority contributing to the future education of children and adolescents (SDG 4).

1.3. HUNGER GAPS AND CHALLENGES

19. Food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty are closely linked to each other. They also relate to high levels of unemployment as well as weak agricultural and fishing sectors.

¹⁸ AfBD, OECD, UNDP, 2016, African Economic Outlook, São Tomé and Príncipe.

¹⁹ According to the African Development Bank it is “critically important for the government to continue to implement comprehensive macroeconomic policies to lift the country’s potential and prioritise investment projects that create diversified, inclusive, job-rich economic growth.”, AfBD, OECD, UNDP, 2016, African Economic Outlook, São Tomé and Príncipe.

²⁰ AfBD, OECD, UNDP, 2016, African Economic Outlook, São Tomé and Príncipe.

²¹ PNUD, 2014. Terceiro Relatório Nacional dos Objectivos do Milênio, São Tomé e Príncipe.

20. São Tomé and Príncipe's hunger gaps and challenges are articulated and addressed in: (i) the 2nd National Strategy for Poverty Reduction (SNRP - II), (ii) and the National Food Security and Nutrition Programme (PNSAN) and (iii) the UNDAF 2017 – 2021.

21. The above-mentioned policies and plans identify the following gaps:

- (i) the country's strong reliance on official development assistance and the weak ability of the government to mobilize sufficient national resources and adequate capacities to implement its national policies in the social sector, infrastructure and food production;
- (ii) continuous political and institutional instability (frequent changes of government) that lead to fragmentation, discontinuity of national programme delivery and lack of sustainability;
- (iii) weak coordination mechanisms at government level that prevent coherence between planning, budgeting and implementation instruments. Implementation and monitoring of sectoral policies are also insufficient due to weak governance structures at central and local level;
- (iv) lack of transparency in the management of public funds, low level of participation of civil society in the political discourse, and a weak legal framework that does not represent a favourable environment for foreign investments and donors;
- (v) limited sectoral policies and strategies.
- (vi) gender inequalities, which constitute one of the fundamental causes of poverty and food and nutritional insecurity.

1.4. KEY COUNTRY PRIORITIES

➤ Government priorities

22. The Government has put in place a number of plans to inform its socio-economic and sustainable development objectives.

23. The 2nd National Strategy for Poverty Reduction (SNRP - II) was adopted in 2012 to cover the 2012-2016 period. The main objectives were to: (i) achieve a GDP growth rate of at least 6 percent by creating conditions for a consistent diversification of the economy; (ii) reduce by 10 percent the population living in poverty by promoting income-generating initiatives; (iii) ensure that all people have access to basic social services.

24. The National Food Security and Nutrition Programme (PNSAN), adopted in 2012, is the reference framework for food security and nutrition priorities until 2023. The PNSAN contributes to: (i) actions aimed at increasing basic food production and improving the marketing system by limiting food imports, (ii) restoring the subsistence economy of the country, and (iii) fighting poverty.

25. The National Social Protection Policy and Strategy (PENPS) adopted in 2014 aims to establish a social protection system by 2023 that effectively protects the poorest and most vulnerable including those affected by gender inequalities (the elderly and disabled people, women and children). The main objectives are (i) to eliminate extreme poverty, (ii) develop a sustainable and obligatory social protection system, (iii) promote employment and expand access to safe and decent work, (iv) establish efficient procedures for the management of the National Social Protection Policy and Strategy and (v) create institutional coordination mechanisms that ensure efficient use of available resources.

26. The São Tomé and Príncipe Education Policy, adopted in 2012, is the framework for education until 2022. For pre-primary and primary school children (3-11 years), it sets the objective to offer free, compulsory and quality education. Also in 2012, the Government created a National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE), which aims to ensure the access of school aged children to a healthy, and balanced diet using local products, to

improve the nutritional status of children and indirectly, the sustainable development of São Tomé and Príncipe.

27. In 2007, the government developed and adopted the National Strategy for Gender Equality and Equity in São Tomé and Príncipe and created the National Institute for the Promotion of Gender Equality and Equity. Gender equality and effective equity are essential to ensuring greater participation of women in the country's development process.
28. Most of these policies were elaborated to respond to the achievement of the goals set by the World Food Summit and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular Objective 1 in the fight against poverty and malnutrition.
29. The Vision 2030 Transformation Agenda of São Tomé and Príncipe, presented in October 2015, updates and frames the main priorities for these policies and programmes. The objectives of Agenda 2030 are reflected in the country's agenda for social cohesion, peace and prosperity. Vision 2030, coupled with an Action Plan for 2016-2019, aims to boost progress in four key areas: i) good governance and public sector reform; ii) promotion of sustainable and inclusive growth; iii) strengthening human capital and social service delivery; and iv) bolstering social cohesion and social protection.
 - *United Nations and other partners*
30. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF 2017-2021) reflects the Government's priorities for 2030 in its three Strategic Outcomes on i) social cohesion and access to basic social services; ii) promoting inclusive sustainable growth and resilience; and iii) strengthening the internal and external credibility of the country through legal reforms. Agenda 2030 and alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals have been taken into account during the UNDAF formulation. It is important to highlight that the government of São Tomé and Príncipe approved the “Delivering as One process”.
31. Beyond the SDGs, the Agenda 2063 of the African Union “*The Future We Want for Africa*” is a key framework for reference and alignment of national plans.

2. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FOR WFP

2.1. WFP'S EXPERIENCE AND LESSONS LEARNED

32. WFP has been present in Sao Tomé and Principe since 1976. Core interventions have focused on providing technical assistance to strengthen government counterparts' capacity in managing school meals activities, supply chain, provision of school meals, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation.
33. Following the establishment of a National School Feeding and Health Programme with WFP's advocacy and support in 2010 and the National Assembly's approval of a school feeding and health policy in February 2011, WFP transferred the responsibility for the provision of school meals entirely to the government in October 2015. However, continuous technical assistance is required to strengthen government capacities in the management of the school feeding programme, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation. Indeed, in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, the previous operation had limitations, mainly due to the shortage of funds and a weak performance of the capacity building component.
34. An evaluation conducted by the Office of Evaluation from September 2015 to February 2016 recommended that a new WFP operation should be focused on strengthening financial, human and institutional capacity to ensure that the Government can autonomously manage the programme in the long term. The evaluation indicated the need to support the Government in defining a financial resource mobilization strategy based on

a multi-year funding plan to secure resources for the programme implementation. This strategy should explore different dimensions, namely: i) domestic public resources, including the possibility of applying the rates and additional taxes on certain economic sectors; ii) bilateral and multilateral funds; and iii) the private sector. WFP should also consider supporting the country in joining the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative for the establishment of a “national SUN movement”.

35. An October 2016 SABER (Systems Approach for Better Education Results) School Feeding workshop deemed the national capacity at the “emerging stage”, indicating a stable education environment despite some weaknesses in Government capacity. According to the SABER findings, WFP was not only deemed an essential partner for the school meals programme, but also key in helping the Government implement the main recommendations issued by the SABER.
36. Strengthening multi-sectorial coordination and partnerships was among the most prominent recommendations in both the external evaluation and the SABER exercise. WFP was called to support the Government in strengthening the school meals steering committee, including revision/adaptation of its composition (by ensuring that civil society is on the committee), its competences, and its terms of reference. In parallel, it has been recommended to develop a strategy involving health, trade, agriculture, finances, social protection and customs for a stronger and more coordinated response.
37. WFP’s engagement in the country has provided many lessons to date:
 - WFP’s support in providing schools meals to children in primary schools contributed to an increase in enrolment figures, which highlights the continued importance of sustained food assistance to children, enrolled in primary school, even in light of the steady improvement of socio-economic indicators.
 - Gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the school feeding program has contributed to the improvement of gender-related indicators and the strengthening of the position of women in schools and communities.
 - Alternative school feeding management models to that of WFP should be studied, developed and tested according to national legislation, government and community capacities to ensure sustainability and ownership. The technical choices relating to the composition of menus, the procurement process and the management model should take into account the diversification of the diet from local products, procurement procedures for local products and decentralization of management for an adequate transition.
 - An analysis and an institutional diagnosis of the needs (human resources, capacity, equipment, etc.) are fundamental in order to be able to identify the bottlenecks and to propose precise corrective measures to the weaknesses observed, taking into account the evolution of national context and existing legislation.
 - A medium-term based process, intersectoral coordination and strategic partnerships with government sectors of agriculture and health, development partners (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations - FAO, United Nations Children’s Fund - UNICEF, World Health Organization - WHO, International Labour Organization - ILO, International Funds for Agricultural Development - IFAD and African Development Bank - AfDB) and local actors (NGOs) during implementation are crucial to achieve sustainable transfer. The synergy of the activities would make it possible to achieve more convincing results and easier community ownership.
 - High political instability throughout the operation undermines government ownership and commitment to the transition.

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- National capacity building needs to be multi-dimensional (institutional, financial, organizational, legal and operational) both at the level of central and local government institutions and the community to ensure ownership.
 - Strengthening the policy framework on school feeding is essential (School Feeding Strategy and Action Plan, Local Production and Purchasing Strategy, Funding Strategy) to ensure sustainability.
 - The transition process has not yet been finalized. The management of the school canteens supply by the government does not mean that the government has totally appropriated the programme, nor that it has the full conditions to ensure its operation and management autonomously.

2.2. OPPORTUNITIES FOR WFP

38. In line with lessons learned from past interventions, opportunities for WFP to support São Tomé and Príncipe's efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goals 2 and 17 include: (i) Strengthening Government's capacity, especially the Ministry of Education to support an effective nationally-led school meals programmes (ii) Enhancing coordination and capacity augmentation activities to assist national counterparts in managing and scaling up income generation activities for smallholder farmers by linking small-scale producers to market opportunities through national and local procurement platforms to sustain Home-Grown School Feeding activities; (iii) Supporting the incorporation of nutrition outcomes and nutrition-sensitive interventions into school meals programmes; and; (v) Supporting joint resource mobilization initiatives to ensure predictable and multi-year funding for the smooth implementation of national programmes.

2.3. STRATEGIC CHANGES

39. The WFP portfolio in São Tomé and Príncipe is currently comprised of Development Project 200295, which was initially designed for 5 years (2012-2016) and was then extended until December 2017, pursuing three objectives:

- To maintain the high level of access to education and human capital development in assisted schools and kindergartens.
- To strengthen the capacity of government ministries, particularly the National School Feeding and Health Programme (PNASE), in school feeding management, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation, and other critical areas.
- To transfer school feeding management responsibilities from WFP to PNASE and provide continued technical assistance in order to lay the groundwork for a sustainable, nationally owned school feeding programme.

40. The project will be extended in time until February 2019 to cover the transitional period required to develop WFP's new Country Strategic Plan, reflecting the current programmatic shift to the sole provision of technical assistance.

41. In light of the strong political will to assume full ownership of the national school meals programme, WFP's goal is to gradually phase-out support to the Government as it concurrently assumes all responsibilities. Consequently, WFP will increasingly engage in policy support, community empowerment, capacity development, and knowledge-generation to ensure a sustainable handover process.

42. WFP will explore possible support to smallholder farmer organizations through the home grown school meals approach, increasing farmers' incomes and improving their productivity through participation in national and local procurement systems. Depending on the outcome of consultations planned with national stakeholders, this would represent a major shift in focus and scale. WFP's expertise in facilitating purchases from smallholders for school meals would allow farmer and fishery organizations, to increase

their production and organization to sustainably expand access to larger institutional purchasers and other markets.

43. Simultaneously, WFP will support the country in launching the National Zero Hunger Strategic Review to identify hunger gaps and solutions in support of achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2, jointly with all relevant actors in the food security and nutrition sector.

3. WFP STRATEGIC ORIENTATION

3.1. DIRECTION, FOCUS AND INTENDED IMPACTS

44. WFP's engagement in the country is reflected in Strategic Outcome 1 and relates to enhancing national capacities for the implementation of the national school meals programme. This is a logical continuation of past efforts in this field and commits WFP to accompany the government on its journey towards Zero Hunger in an area where the organization has expertise.
45. WFP will guarantee the sustainability of the handover of the school meals programme under the Transitional ICSP period and should lead to a community-run and government financed programme that enables relevant national partners to independently design, implement and manage it.
46. Communities will be at the centre of all interventions, and equitable participation and ownership of activities will be incorporated into all levels of local development plans.
47. In addition, gender equality will guide WFP's intervention as an essential requirement for achieving the strategic outcome.

3.2. STRATEGIC OUTCOMES, FOCUS AREAS, EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND KEY ACTIVITIES

3.2.1. STRATEGIC OUTCOME 1: THE GOVERNMENT OF SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE HAS ENHANCED CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION FOCUSED SAFETY NETS NATIONWIDE

➤ *Outcome description*

48. In accordance with SDG 17, this strategic outcome aims to enhance the capacity of the Government to implement food security and nutrition focused safety nets nationwide. WFP's interventions will support government institutions in the planning, implementation, and elaboration of policy reforms in order to strengthen social safety nets, such as income generation activities for smallholder farmers and education, health and nutrition services. The content of the capacity building initiatives will include National gender responsive policies and women will benefit equally. Special attention will be given to facilitate knowledge exchange among selected countries with similar experiences through South-South Cooperation. Interventions will be centered towards capacity strengthening to enhance the Government's national home-grown school meals programme and its capacity to provide tailored technical assistance for hunger-focused cost analyses and evidence generation for improved programme design.
49. This strategic outcome directly supports WFP Strategic Result 5 – Countries have strengthened capacities to implement the SDGs (SDG Target 17.9).

➤ *Focus Areas*

50. This strategic outcome aims to address the challenges that prevent the Government to adequately implement sustainable food security and nutrition focused safety nets across the country. The focus is therefore on root causes.

➤ *Expected outputs*

51. Strategic Outcome 1 will also contribute to the achievement of SDG 2.1 (access to food), SDG 2.2 (end malnutrition), SDG 2.3 (smallholder productivity and income), SDG 3

(ensure healthy lives and promote well-being) and SDG 4.1 (free, equitable and quality access to education).

52. The following three outputs will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Outcome 1:

- School children (Tier 3) benefit from a sustainable national school feeding policy, strategy and programme (Output category C) in order to increase access to adequate nutritious food (SR1), improve health (SDG3), and achieve better education results (SDG4)
- Food insecure populations (Tier 3) benefit from enhanced national social safety nets (Output category C) in order to increase and protect their access to food (SR1).
- Food insecure populations (Tier 3) benefit from strengthened South-South Cooperation between São Tomé and Príncipe and selected countries (Output category C) in order to increase and protect their access to food (SR1).

➤ *Key activities*

53. Following the recommendations stemming from the 2016 Development Project 200295 evaluation and from the results of the 2016 SABER exercise, WFP will support government counterparts through the following activities:

Activity 1: *Provide technical assistance to the Government to design, finance and manage its national home grown school meals programme (activity category 4; modality: capacity strengthening)*

54. WFP will support the Government in developing a home grown school meals policy (with short, medium and long-term objectives) and to advocate for its approval by the legislative branch of the Government. This will facilitate decision-making and political commitment to the School Feeding law. The policy will identify realistic objectives for PNASE, roles and responsibilities of different actors, and relevant coordination mechanisms, and will address the review of national legislation on public procurement, supply contracts, terms of payment, type/quality of products, money transfer to schools and its management at the local level.

55. At the same time, WFP will promote intersectoral coordination and school feeding partnerships. Particular attention will be paid to the PNASE steering committee (composition, competences, and terms of reference) and synergies with the sectorial ministries, United Nations Agencies (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF) and NGOs will be reinforced.

56. WFP will work closely with the Ministries of Education, Agriculture, Health, Finance, Trade and Customs) and with the United Nations agencies towards a strategy for mobilizing financial resources for the national home grown school meals programme. This will be done to guarantee a multi-year funding plan based on national public resources, bilateral and multilateral donors and the private sector. The strategy will be complemented by the development of advocacy material to support fundraising efforts and the joint creation of a donor database.

57. Jointly with policy-makers and technical staff of PNASE, WFP will also support a participatory and detailed diagnosis of institutional needs (human, material and financial resources).

58. Capacity strengthening of government officials and partners will be the backbone of a functioning monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure full ownership and sustainability of nationally led programmes. M&E as well as feedback mechanism tools will take into account the gender dimension in order to better understand and analyse the inequalities between men and women. Attention will be given to supporting PNASE in monitoring school feeding programmes. WFP will help PNASE with financial and

technical support to create a database for an integrated system of monitoring and evaluation.

Activity 2: *Provide targeted technical assistance for hunger-focused cost analysis and evidence generation for improved programme design to the Government (activity 12; modality: Capacity strengthening).*

59. The Government's objective is to increase the supply of food from smallholders as well as local procurement mechanisms for social protection programmes such. WFP will carry out a feasibility study on the cost of school meals (imported and locally produced food, operational and supply chain costs) and develop flexible modalities and menu compositions based on available budgets, demand and food supply. WFP will also analyze the value added of local food purchases from smallholder farmers, including women as opposed to food imports. The outcome of this should contribute to the promotion of agriculture, fisheries and livestock sectors and the improvement of smallholder livelihoods.
60. WFP will work closely with the Rome-Based Agencies (RBA), the WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger, the Brazilian Cooperation Agency and the Ministries of Education, Agriculture and Health as well as NGOs to support and increase the participation of smallholder farmer organizations, including women's organizations, in national and local commercial mechanisms and institutional markets. Best practices in local food purchase initiatives linked to school feeding will be capitalized and scaled up.
61. In collaboration with the Government and its partners, WFP will refine the decentralized home grown school feeding model, which connects smallholder farmers and fishers to nutrition-sensitive school meals programmes through the procurement of fresh, nutritious foods while expanding their market opportunities. Activities will be aligned with government's programmes and conducted by the steering committee of the PNASSE. Local procurement programmes will be designed to ensure the quality, timeliness and relevance of the food supply. Support will also be provided to strengthen smallholder organizations and expand their access to other markets, such as kindergartens, secondary schools and hospitals.
62. With the support of WFP Centre of Excellence, WFP will also promote knowledge exchange and study visits between São Tomé and Príncipe and countries that have relevant and similar experiences in social safety nets with links and focus on school meals. These exchanges will help shape high-level decision-making, and mobilize a wide range of key actors to ensure the smooth implementation of the home grown school meals programme. Priority will be given to women smallholder farmers, given their contribution to fill the nutrition gap and the potential to fill the gender inequality gap

3.3. TRANSITION AND EXIT STRATEGIES

63. WFP's objective is to gradually phase-out its support to the Government as it currently assumes responsibilities for a nationally-owned school feeding programme.
64. This transitional ICSP represents a continuation of project DEV200295 activities, which were initially based on direct WFP implementation, but then shifted towards capacity building, policy orientation and support for the implementation of national programmes.
65. A Zero Hunger Strategic Review (ZHSR) will be conducted during 2017 and will inform the five-year Country Strategic Plan (CSP) that is scheduled to start in March 2019. The ZHSR will pay particular attention to gender equality issues both in the process and the methodology of analysis as well as in the content. . Moreover, the review will take into account challenges related to gender to adequately inform the formulation of the CSP.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. BENEFICIARY ANALYSIS

66. Under the transitional ICSP, the direct beneficiary group of WFP's capacity strengthening support is the Ministry of Education. At central level, the PNASE steering committee, which will be comprised of women and men, will be the main beneficiary, while at local level, WFP will train and support headmasters, school canteen managers, members of parent-teacher associations, members of farmers/fishery organizations. In order to guarantee gender equality, women and men will equally benefit from WFP support.
67. Indirect beneficiaries are 43,000 school ages children that will benefit from improved government programme delivery in order to meet their food and nutrition requirements.

4.2. TRANSFERS

4.2.1. FOOD AND CASH-BASED TRANSFERS

N/A

4.2.2. CAPACITY STRENGTHENING INCLUDING SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

68. WFP's transitional ICSP will be fully dedicated to strengthening government capacity to successfully manage the school feeding program in the long term.
69. With a gender responsive lense, capacity development will focus on evidence and data building, modelling scenarios, policy and strategy formulation and participatory diagnosis to address gaps identified at national level.
70. WFP will facilitate exchange of knowledge, skills and expertise through South-South cooperation with:
- WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil to strengthen government and communities' capacity in view of ensuring the effective transition to a sustainable home grown school meals programme.
 - Cabo Verde to understand the challenges the country faced and how it capitalized on lessons learned during the transfer of the school feeding programme from WFP to the government.
 - Other West African countries that have succeeded in allocating and guaranteeing state budget lines for national school meals programmes.
71. This aims to increase national ownership and government commitment.

4.3. SUPPLY CHAIN

72. During the transitional ICSP timeframe, WFP will explore potential support needs on the Government side in relation to supply chain analysis and improvement.

4.4. COUNTRY OFFICE CAPACITY AND PROFILE

73. Given the increasing focus on the provision of technical assistance in social protection matters, the implementation of the transitional ICSP requires a review of the Country Office structure and staff profiles. Identification of new roles and a clear definition of responsibilities will be critical to achieve the identified operational results.
74. Considering the pace of development in São Tomé and Príncipe, WFP staff will need to be flexible and multi-purpose in responding to the government's needs. Support from Headquarters and the Regional Bureau will be requested as required.

4.5. PARTNERSHIPS

-
75. The Ministry of Education remains WFP's main operational partner for the implementation of the school meals programme. WFP also worked with the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Blue Economy to enable the set up of a pilot project promoting the use of local products in school meals.
76. In order to develop a home grown school meals programme as part of a broader social safety net, WFP will strengthen its partnership with the Ministries of Health and Social Affairs, Agriculture and Fisheries and Ministry of Planning and Development which are the institutions in charge of the main policies and programmes for food and nutrition security, social protection and poverty reduction. WFP will also work closely with Ministry of Finance and International Cooperation, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and local communities to develop a resource mobilization strategy to ensure the effective implementation of the school feeding programme.
77. Within the United Nations system, the main partners remains UNICEF for water, sanitation and hygiene activities in schools, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) who are involved in the implementation of school-based deworming activities and life skills campaigns.
78. WFP will work closely with the RBAs to ensure complementarity and synergies in view of developing and scaling up initiatives such as linking school canteens to local supply from smallholder farmers and artisanal fisheries. Strengthening a multisectoral partnerships will enable a more coordinated and effective response in the development of sustainable and diversified agriculture and fishery sectors.
79. WFP will also work with specialized non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and research institutes, both local and international, to provide complementary community level services and improve household and community prospects for long-term resilience building. Given WFP's commitment to gender-transformative country capacity strengthening, WFP will also work with the national women's machinery and gender equality as well as with committed and competent civil society organisations.

5. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

5.1. MONITORING AND EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS

80. WFP will develop a Monitoring and Evaluation plan that measures progress towards the strategic outcome, ensuring accountability, providing evidence of results achieved, and making necessary adjustments. WFP will promote gender-responsive monitoring as an essential part of its plan. Outcome and performance indicators will be shared annually with the São Tomé and Príncipe National Statistics Institute.
81. A review of the transitional- ICSP will be conducted by end-2018. WFP and its governmental and non-governmental partners will evaluate the achievements made during the period with a particular attention to:
- the pilot or the scale up of the local food purchase from smallholder farmers/fishers to supply the schools canteens
 - the intersectoral coordination and school feeding partnerships.
 - the strategy for mobilizing financial resources for the national home grown school meals programme.
82. The Country Office's approach to performance management is based on the corporate results framework. Performance will be regularly monitored, analyzed, and published in annual outcome and semi-annual monitoring reports.
83. The monitoring of SDG indicators and national indicators will be the responsibility of national authorities with the assistance of the United Nations. The country office's

strategic outcomes describe the short-to-medium term effects that contribute to the achievement of the national SDG 2 and 17 targets.

5.2. RISK MANAGEMENT

➤ *Contextual Risks*

84. The most significant risk is linked to the high political instability and frequent changes in government that compromise government ownership and commitment during the transition process. WFP will mitigate this risk by sensitizing high-level political representatives on the importance of a school meals programme as a major social safety net. WFP will also advocate for urgent policy reforms to strengthen national legislation and regulation (procurement mechanisms, operational procedures) and community involvement.

➤ *Programmatic Risks*

85. WFP is still considered as a humanitarian partner rather than a development actor by the Government, UN agencies and donors. Poor mobilization of resources for capacity building activities and limited strategic partnerships with agricultural and fisheries development initiatives are illustrative examples. WFP will make a strategic shift during the transitional ICSP by consolidating its role as an enabler rather than implementer of development solutions. The Country Office's capacities will be reinforced through a review of its team structure, the recruitment of experts and development of WFP staff competences on policy engagement, social protection and safety nets, nutrition, market access support, partnership-building.

➤ *Institutional Risks*

86. Insufficient national budget allocation and limited capacities compromise the sustainability of the transition process and constitute the main institutional risks. This will require close attention in WFP's ways of working with the Government at the central and local levels. WFP will advocate for mobilization of funds, and explore with the Government alternative financing solutions.

6. RESOURCES FOR RESULTS

6.1. COUNTRY PORTFOLIO BUDGET

| COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN INDICATIVE ANNUAL BUDGET REQUIREMENT (USD) | | | |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| | Year 1 2018 | Year 2 2019 | Total |
| Strategic Outcome 1 | \$253,738 | \$80,868 | \$334,606 |
| TOTAL | \$253,738 | \$80,868 | \$334,606 |

87. The transitional ICSP has a budget of USD 334,606 reflecting a shift from direct service delivery towards increased policy and capacity development support.

6.2. RESOURCING OUTLOOK

88. The Country Office has received on average USD 248,163 per year between 2010 and 2016. In 2015 and 2016, WFP received a significantly smaller amount of contributions to its programmes than was expected. The Country Office has since restructured and, as outlined in this plan, is making the shift in strategic orientation required by the evolving context in the country.

89. WFP has already engaged a discussion with financial institutions, and expects positive feedback from AfDB. WFP has submitted a proposal, fully aligned with the transitional ICSP, to cover an 18-month period. The main activities proposed are to conduct the Zero

Hunger Strategic Review and to strengthen government and communities' capacity to develop and manage a home grown school meals programme (diagnosis of the local value chain, management of local food supply and demand, cost control, management of modalities).

6.3. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGY

90. School feeding is recognized by the government's main policy instruments (SNRP – II, PNSAN, PENPS) as an important safety net. Various partners, including the United Nations system, civil society, multilateral cooperation and bilateral cooperation are already supporting school feeding and related activities (agriculture, health, nutrition, water, hygiene and sanitation) in schools and communities.
91. WFP will consider supporting the country in joining the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative for the establishment of a “national SUN movement” that could facilitate the involvement of the private sector, donors, and civil society to mobilize national and international funds for the school feeding programme.
92. To address the capacity development needs in São Tomé and Príncipe, the CO will explore new, longer-term funding arrangements with traditional and non-traditional donors. WFP will sharpen its profile and position itself as a partner of choice, delivering expert technical assistance to help the Government achieve its zero hunger targets.
93. To compensate for an expected decline in funding and support sustainable resourcing, WFP will consolidate existing partnerships, expand and diversify its donor base, and explore new funding streams.
94. WFP will lobby among organizations, which have already supported STP in the past years, to continue sustaining the school feeding programme.
95. WFP will support the Government in defining a financial resource mobilization strategy based on a multi-year funding plan to secure resources for the programme implementation.
96. Through joint proposals, WFP will collaborate with United Nations agencies, particularly with RBAs, to deliver an integrated and complementary response.
97. While intensifying collaboration with private sector donors and international financial institutions, a donor/ partnership mapping and planning exercise will be done to identify other potential funding opportunities.
98. In parallel, through the Centers of Excellence, WFP will strengthen South-South Cooperation, particularly with China and Brazil, which are very committed in education sector and development of national capacities.

**ANNEX I: SUMMARY OF LOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF SÃO TOMÉ
AND PRÍNCIPE
TRANSITIONAL INTERIM COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (YEAR
2018-2019)**

(SEE HQ VALIDATED VERSION)

ANNEX II:

| INDICATIVE COST BREAKDOWN ALONG STRATEGIC OUTCOME (USD) | | |
|--|----------------------------|------------------|
| WFP Strategic Results / SDG Targets | SR 5, SDG 17.9 | Total |
| WFP Strategic Outcomes | Strategic Outcome 1 | |
| Transfer | \$182 578 | \$182 578 |
| Implementation | \$101 489 | \$101 489 |
| Adjusted DSC (%) | \$28 648 | \$28 648 |
| Sub-total | \$312 716 | \$312 716 |
| ISC (7%) | \$21 890 | \$21 890 |
| TOTAL | \$334 606 | \$334 606 |

Drafted by: Diogenes SANTOS, Programme Officer, Sao Tome Principe, Office
Cleared by: Abdoulaye Balde, Country Director, Cameroon Country Office
Reviewed by: Jihan Y Jacobucci, RBD CSP coordinator
Cleared by: Margot van der Velden, Deputy Regional Director/OiC

ANNEX III: MAP

ANNEX IV: ACRONYMS

| | |
|----------|---|
| AfDB | African Development Bank |
| EU | European Union |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GII | Gender Inequality Index |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| HIV/AIDS | Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome |
| ICSP | Interim Country Strategic Plan |
| IFAD | International Funds for Agricultural Development |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| MCIS | Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goals |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PENPS | National Social Protection Policy and Strategy |
| PNASE | National School Feeding and Health Programme |
| PNSAN | National Food Security and Nutrition Programme |
| RBA | Rome Based Agencies |
| SABER | Systems Approach for Better Education Results |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SNRP | National Strategy for Poverty Reduction |
| SUN | Scaling Up Nutrition |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| WHO | World Health Organization |